



History

2005 JOINT TASK FORCE-ARMED FORCES INAUGURAL COMMITTEE

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Theme 1: THE MILITARY HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE INAUGURATION SINCE OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

- From his home in Mt Vernon, to be sworn in at New York City, Washington was escorted by 1 civilian and military aide. Although not planned, all along the way, he was treated to military honors by local militia, salutes of cannon firing and leading citizens on horseback.
- The first inaugural parade, April 30th, 1789, in New York City included Troop of horses, Artillery, 2 companies of grenadiers, a Company of Light Infantry and a Battalion of Infantry.

Theme 2: THE INCEPTION OF THE INAUGURAL PARADE

- In 1801, Jefferson was escorted by elements of the Virginia militia. The Richmond Light Infantry Blues were present then and that unit is still in existence – it is a National Guard unit in the Richmond area. For his second inaugural, Jefferson was informally escorted by civilian workers at the Washington Navy Yard who sang and played music. This was the true start of inaugural parade.
- Thomas Jefferson was the first president inaugurated in Washington in March 1801.
- In 1829 and 1833, Andrew Jackson's inaugurations included the first formal military units.
- Under the terms of the 20th amendment, in 1933, FDR's first inaugural became the last one to be held in March. January 20 became the date for all future inaugurations. Prior to this time, the military ceremonial program for the inauguration was predominantly an Army function, headed by MDW.

Theme 3: MILITARY CEREMONIAL SUPPORT

- Traditionally, the role has been ceremonial and for the most part has remained in that capacity.
- During Grant's 1873 inauguration, the modern era of pomp and ceremony plus massive crowds began.

Theme 4: DOD OFFICIALLY ORGANIZED AFIC IN THE EARLY 1950s

- The Department of Defense, in the early 1950s, established AFIC as a joint military organization to oversee military ceremonial support to the inauguration. AFIC's presence was immediately felt as Eisenhower's 1953 inaugural parade was recorded as the longest, lasting over 5 hours.
- Eisenhower's 1957 inauguration consisted of close to 9,000 military personnel.
- Kennedy's 1961 inaugural parade consisted of over 15,000 military and 15,000 civilian personnel and took over 3 hours to pass the reviewing stand. In addition, the military provided VIP escorts and supported 3 inaugural balls.
- In 1977, the military continued its ceremonial role even though the cold weather was a major factor. During this time, Carter began the walk-along Pennsylvania Avenue tradition.
- In 1997, Clinton and the first family also participated in the Inaugural Parade by walking the last few blocks to the White House.
- In 1985 Reagan's second swearing-in ceremony on January 21 had to be held indoors and the parade was canceled. The outside temperature at noon was only 7°F.